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Translated for this Journal.

Albert Lortzing.

From the German of W. H. RIEHL.

A composer, whose songs live in the mouths of the whole people, must first die before the people are reminded that these songs were not woven of themselves, but that it was the deceased *kapellmeister* of the Friedrich Wilhelmstädter theatre in Berlin, this very LORTZING, that made them.

Lortzing in his personal fortunes, as in his whole artistic tendency bears a strong resemblance to CONRADIN KREUTZER.* Both became popular by their unassuming stand in Art: but the rare glory, of having sung to the hearts of the people, both had to purchase by an unsettled, and often strongly proletarian life, vexed by continual disappointments and privations. Kreutzer at an advanced age had to seek a livelihood on a Russian provincial stage, and when he died it fell to the pious duty of the nation to provide for those he left behind him. After Lortzing's death, his friend Düringer published the biography and letters of the deceased for the benefit of his children. This little book is a chapter in the history of our social misery, which teaches us that the times of the poor poet, who has to doom his old age to the almshouse in order that he may offer up the vigor of his youth to the artistic glory of his country, are by no means past; and furthermore that Lortzing, who was gifted with the simple melody of the people, had for an accompanying gift that silent, self-renouncing trust in Providence, which "the people" strictly so-called, that is to say, the poor people in Germany, have always maintained so heroically.

The fate of these two popular composers reminds us of the tragical end of a kindred old master of

* See last number of this Journal.

the popular opera, FERDINAND KAUER, the composer of the *Donauweibchen* (Nymph of the Danube). It is a little story and sounds to us like a deeply symbolical poem. The Viennese musician, whose popular operas had brought so many thousands into the theatres, had long been forgotten as a pauper, passed away or supposed dead, when in the Spring of 1830 the news was suddenly spread that, during the terrible freshet which laid waste the banks of the Danube with fatal rapidity in the night of the 1st of March, an old man of eighty, who lived wretched and unknown in the basement of a little house upon the bank, brooding over his old piles of music, had barely escaped drowning, but that his last, sole treasure, his dear MSS. compositions, on which his memory fed itself and which kept up a little remnant of good spirits in his care-worn life, were lost. For a short time the unhappy man wandered about on his beggar's staff, until he died from utter debility. That was Ferdinand Kauer, a man, whose popularity in the day thereof had spread through half of Europe, the composer of the *Donauweibchen*. The *Donauweibchen*, the water-spirit (*Nixe*) of his country's stream, to whose glory he had sung his two best compositions, had at last drawn down to herself also the composer, sick of life! But she had compassionately taken care, that a ray of poetry should fall upon the evening of the poor old man's life; whereas ungrateful men had left him but the common prose of a worn out and forgotten proletary's lingering death.

An artist, who seeks to appear no more than he really is; who in his productions does not torture himself to become more than by God's gift he may; who would not get above himself; who puts his works and not his person in the foreground,—a man who makes himself useful everywhere and for that very reason never gets due credit; a not merely personal, but also aesthetically modest talent—this in our day so rare phenomenon was Lortzing.

He was no epoch-making musician, he did not try to be. If he had tried to be, he would have failed, like hundreds of his fellows. The course of his development lies clear before us; it is not that of a genius. Having grown up in the theatrical world, the gifted actor and singer gradually felt the need of passing over from the sphere of reproduction to that of production. Playing and imitating, he came to creating, and creation with him remained all the time play and imitation. No steady organic development of one ground-thought filling the whole artist's personality, reigns in the genesis of his works. You might say on the contrary: Lortzing felt his way along until the thing would go,

and a happy instinct told him in good season when he had found the point where it went admirably. Of conscious tendency there was absolutely, and fortunately, no pretence.

Lortzing was thoroughly naïve, naïve even in the welding together of the most heterogeneous forms. When original thoughts failed him, then he innocently leaned, as if it were a matter understood of course, upon the thoughts of others. Such a proceeding is only possible in Music, which has maintained not only the most refined, but also the most childlike character among the modern Arts. Contemporary literature therefore scarcely affords a true parallel for Lortzing. He has been called an eclectic. But the genuine eclectic drags before you, with theoretic, Art-historical consciousness, the forms and colors of all ages, in order thereby to compose the motley mosaic of the alleged most excellent; he sets the mask of Jupiter upon the Torso of Hercules, and tacks on below the legs of the Apollo Belvedere, and thinks that now he has produced an image representing the combined ideal of all manly beauty. This cannot be said of Lortzing, from whom every theoretic tendency lay infinitely far off. Not because he was learned in his Art, but for just the contrary reason, because he was no scholar, has he let all sorts of contradictory thoughts and forms, both borrowed and original, run along side by side so innocently.

Criticism never became with him, as it has done with most modern artists, the tenth Muse. Hence the sunny bright, Spring-like quality, which seems so lovely and attractive to us in Lortzing's pictures. The cloud shadows of reflection have never darkened the blue sky of his cheerful Art.—His acting, too, upon the stage is said to have been easy, lively, always natural. His whole life long he was a child of Nature, and such are confessedly very rare in our reflective age.

When one considers how, in our day, particularly since the example of BERLIOZ, music has been made into an apocalyptic allegory, wherein all the sense and nonsense of the age purports to stand portrayed in fabulous tone-pictures; when one reads for instance, how the *absolute Critique* has recently discovered, that from BEETHOVEN's third Symphony in E♭ (*Eroica*) to his ninth in D minor (Choral) we mark the unmistakable progress from republicanism to socialism, it does one good to feel that people like Lortzing, too, have lived among us, who could play so contentedly and unaffectedly with innocent tones, and who sought nothing further than a pleasant play. There is an infinite gain to sensible, even if it be superficial clearness, in this relief to deeply contemplative musical insanity.

To those reflective musicians, who torment

themselves without either outward success or inward satisfaction, who feel as badly as if they had perpetrated a stupid blunder, if perchance for once a natural and simple melody flows into their pen, and who then tug and twist at such a melody until it has happily lost all natural flow; to those musical tendency-manufacturers the popular success of every work of Lortzing preaches the moral with which St. John concludes his first epistle: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols!"

Lortzing wrote, composed, played, sang his operas himself, to-day conducted their performance and the next day wielded the kapellmeister's baton. It reminds us of the time, when the old MATTHESON still sang the hero in the first acts of one of the operas composed by him and, after he had stabbed himself in the third, in the fourth and fifth acts went down into the orchestra and conducted the rest of the performance in person. In all possible kinds of theatres, great and small, Lortzing in his life's changeful pilgrimage has toiled. No artistic task was too small for the modest man.

Considered as a musician in the abstract, Lortzing was almost a dilettante, but as a theatrical-musician he was a man of the profession. With most of the living opera composers the reverse has been the case. Therefore with these the history of Art registers only the scores, but with people like Lortzing the performances. Herein he seems in elective affinity with those poet players, who from IFFLAND to DEVRIENT, BENEDIX, and so forth, do not in composition get beyond a certain dilettantism, but who by their masterly theatrical talents contrive tolerably well to offset this weakness. Lortzing's operas play and sing themselves, as it were, since every single number from beforehand has been accepted and determined on as suited to the stage.

Had Lortzing possessed a deeper culture, he would not have evaded self-criticism so easily.—He would have worked in a more rounded, ripe and well-considered manner; he would have stricken out many a platitude of text and music, which had flowed into his pen; but if he ever got to the end of a score, then probably he would have worked it all over again from the beginning, until every simple effect would have been spoiled, or, likely as not, he would have torn it up. To produce as easily as Lortzing did, requires in our time a certain naive absence of culture. As MENDELSSOHN achieved musical successes by the richness of his culture, so Lortzing won the prize of practical success over many a more richly endowed composer by the *naïveté* of his poverty of culture! Therein does the artistic diversity of the age show itself, that such opposites can subsist so pleasantly side by side, and even attain outwardly to like results.

The whole nature of our composer made him the born adversary of that over-spiced, reflective tendency-music of the French New-Romanticists, which has so long controlled and still controls the German opera. His happy instinct led him to the only point, where a man like him could victoriously assail this false direction. He seized upon the German People's Song, and wove it, with multifarious change and imitation, as the costliest ornament, into his operas. In this way his *Czar* and *Zimmermann* took effect; the songs have kept this work afloat. And while the master was wrestling at home with German artist

cares, the song of the Czar made the tour round the world. It was mainly this happy thought, of transferring the popular German song out of the farces into the higher comic opera, that has made Lortzing a celebrated composer. The songs have given to his operas that bit of Art-historical importance, which they could hardly have had otherwise. Lortzing stepped into the ranks of musical reformers, without knowing or intending it. In his songs he made front against the French New-Romance, while in his arias and ensembles he still borrowed from them quite genially all sorts of motley frippery. It is scarcely possible for another musician to proceed in so naive a manner. With him too the genius of the German song has become mighty in the weak. Lortzing by no means apprehended the German *Volkslied* in its depth, in its historical sanctity, as Mendelssohn has done; on the contrary with him the German popular song appears mostly in its homeliest garb, often enough prinked out with modern mannerisms. But by this very fact the *Volkslied* gives the more shining proof of its indestructible inborn energy and freshness, that it can operate so magically even when thus diluted.

One might say that the popular element with Lortzing often smacks of the old-fogy *Philisterei*. I say it not disparagingly. For I am not thinking of the leathern Philistines of our modern town society, but of those "divine Philistines" of the rococo period of musical history, whom I have elsewhere described.* As these introduced the real good-natured dilettantism into parlor music, so Lortzing propagated the echoes of the same upon the stage. But this German "divine Philistine" is a humorous fellow, at all events ten times better than the *bläsé* fop, who has become musically embodied in the points of the new French comic opera. FLOTOW, in many pieces a successful imitator of Lortzing, has nevertheless in his musical comedy made a considerable advance from the German Philistine to the Parisian coxcomb. All that German opera has gained by it is a new form of disease.

Even the many little jokes, droll conceits and improvisations, which Lortzing has scattered through the text-books of his operas, are for the most part rather Philistine. This harmonizes with the entire description of our master. The tone of musical romance, which he endeavored to strike in his *Waffenschmied* (armorer), only succeeded where the old German 'fogy' (*Spießbürger*) was to be depicted; the chivalric element is a failure. In the magical opera *Undine*, where Lortzing has aspired to the musical delineation of the tender, shadowy dream-life of the spirit world, the most characteristic portion of the music is a couple of downright hearty drinking songs.

Herein Lortzing's manner of appropriating the German *Volkslied* for the opera, differs strikingly from the use made of it by CARL MARIA VON WEBER. Weber idealizes the *Volkslied*, he renders it transparent with the fabulous magic glow of his romantic mood of mind; Lortzing makes the naturalness of the *Volkslied* if possible still more natural, with a right citizen-like familiarity, somewhat home-baked to be sure, but generally without becoming flat. The aristocratic figures and situations in his *Wildschütz* (Poacher) are entire failures; the Philister-ish queued school-master on the contrary is successful. The tendency to seek the essence of musical comedy in

* In an article about Pleyel, Gyrowetz, Hoffmeister, &c.

the humor of *Philisterei*, has been constantly characteristic of German opera since DITTERSDORF. Therein lies precisely the inextinguishable charm of Dittersdorf's music, that its creator was such a "divine Philistine." A standing formalism of musical comedy has attached itself to this phenomenon: even MOZART and HAYDN could not rid themselves of it; and these forms of Philister-like fun in tones through the hereditary transmission of a century, like an "inventory of the iron hieft," have descended at last to our Lortzing. The burgomaster van Bett in his *Czar und Zimmermann* is the genuine representative of such delightful musical *Philisterei*; but he is cut entirely to the pattern of the Dittersdorf 'old foggy.' Lortzing has known how to prize the importance of the good discovery, for he has constantly worked anew according to this model.

It is worthy of remark that the German painters began to employ the Philister queues as the best material and most thankful form of modern caricature, at the same time that Lortzing caricatured the same tribe musically with such success. Precisely because Lortzing's comedy is often so Philister-like, has it found so immense a public. Whoever, in joke or in earnest, appeals to the Philistines, is always sure in Germany that he will find an audience.

The race of unsophisticated artist natures, who sing on carelessly, because song is given them, is disappearing every day. Lortzing in this sense was a rare, one might say a belated appearance. The people will keep on singing his songs and—as he himself has done—re-shaping them in sport, long after his name shall be quite forgotten. But in the history of Art that name and the works on which it is imprinted will be designated as a memorable evidence of the success of an entirely simple and modest talent, unmoved by the reflectiveness and the æsthetic egoism of the age, compared with the unspeakable barrenness and fruitless striving of so many minds far more richly and more highly endowed.

From the Musical Review, (New York).

Letters about Richard Wagner, to a young Composer.

The above is the title of a series of letters we find in the *Fliegende Blätter für Musik*, a musical pamphlet, issued at irregular intervals in Leipzig. The editor and author is the same who, some years since, issued two volumes of musical letters under the pseudonym of the "Well-known." These volumes have attained a large circulation, in consequence of the practical knowledge and experience in musical matters exhibited in them. As no one in Germany is ignorant of the right name of this "Well-known," we may as well give it here. It is Professor LOBE, a composer of operas, symphonies, and musical compositions of various kinds, and for some time the editor of the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, published by Breitkopf and Haertel, and previously edited by Rochlitz and Hauptmann. Prof. Lobe was also an intimate friend of Mendelssohn, with whom he, at various times, held most interesting and curious conversations in regard to musical matters, one of which we have heretofore given.

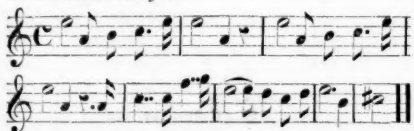
"Well-known" is strongly opposed to the eccentricities of the so-called new school in Germany; he believes neither in the entire novelty of its doctrines, nor in the benefits to be derived by music in general from them. He is classed as a decided opponent of Wagner and his followers.—Still, in marked contrast to his London partizans, Prof. Lobe's opposition does not go so far as to render him blind and unjust to what there is in

this school which is undeniably good and a progress. So in these letters, while he very clearly points out what he deems the extravagances of Wagner, with regard to instrumentation and modulation—while he calls attention to his “imitation of Weber,” and many other “defects, which are in direct opposition to some of the principles advanced in his writings, and which may be found as well in most of the composers who have preceded him,” he most willingly and heartily admits the many beauties contained in *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. In evidence of this, we quote some sentences from his twelfth letter:

“As it is known to you, a great many think that Wagner can not produce melodies! Look at the following song from *Tannhäuser*:



Or this from *Lohengrin*:



Had Wagner never written other melodies than these two, the above-mentioned reproach would be unjust, and not to be accounted for, or there are no melodies in any opera. But both these operas show many similar true melodies and tuneful phrases.”

Prof. Lobe afterwards refers to the vision of Elsa in *Lohengrin*, and Ostrand's hypocritical flatterings of Elsa, in the same opera, as proofs that Wagner does possess the gift of melody.—From the thirteenth letter of this series we extract as follows:

“The new school requires that the principal expression should be given to the orchestra. There is no doubt that the voice, with mere melody, can not express all the different feelings which may agitate the human breast, at one and the same time. If Tamina, in Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, should sing, ‘Help! help! or I am lost!’ without accompaniment of the orchestra, we should indeed hear the cry of fright and terror, but the chilling of the blood, the trembling of the nerves, the benumbing of the senses, would find no expression: to do this is the task of the orchestra. But how much soever an orchestra may add in this respect, it should never overpower and stifle the voice of the singer; for, in the latter case, pure instrumental music would be the result, and this, you know, the school ‘of the future’ does not allow.

“What Wagner so earnestly preaches in this regard is not always put in practice by himself; for his operas show many well-proportioned instrumental phrases and entire pieces, which, moreover, produce splendid effects. It is also true that there are also many places where the voices of the orchestra are so numerous, express so many things, and become so very loud, that the words and even tones of the singer are barely heard, if at all. Look at the part written for Elsa, in the score of the first finale of *Lohengrin*; call to mind the mighty masses of chorus and orchestra, and the different figures which roar around the delicate woman's voice, and you will see, what every one who has listened to a performance of this opera must have himself experienced, namely, that the singing of Elsa is not to be heard at all. It is true that there is almost no opera entirely devoid of such nonsense,

and of this I shall have more to say at some other time; but it was not to have been expected that Wagner, the so-much praised cleanser of the Augean stables, should have left untouched this dirt, just as his predecessors had left it.”

In another portion of the same letter, Prof. Lobe writes:

“Wagner possesses an extraordinary talent, a remarkably delicate sense for new, and at the same time characteristic and expressive modulations. In the beginning of his operas, or when, at the piano-forte, you go through a single scene of one of them, you will find many of these modulations most delightful and impressive; but, in time, this constant change of modulation becomes stale, and even unimpressive, from that fixed law of human nature which will not permit long-continued extremes of excitement.”

“Well-known” concludes these letters, from which our limits have compelled us to make but brief extracts, with the following remarks:

“It is not a pleasant task to call attention rather to the faults than to the beauties of a composer of such high gifts as Richard Wagner. But he who really loves Art and artists can not do otherwise.—Wagner, by his letters and criticisms, has provoked comparison between them and his music. He possesses one great quality—ENERGY. This is rare in our day, most valuable in itself, and generally exercises an irresistible power over the majority of men. Could he and would he restrain this energy within true and proper boundaries, and not drive it to wild fancies and fanaticism, it would be better for him.—It is true that the polemics excited by his writings, and the constant noise of his disciples have, to a high degree, awakened curiosity to hear his operas.—Every body will see and hear them, and as they have a genuine poetical and musical value, it is quite natural that they must please everywhere. But the mighty stream of enthusiasm will flow by and pass away. When curiosity shall have been sufficiently satisfied, and the public, by repeated hearings, have learned not only better to appreciate the many beauties, but also to detect the weak points, the works of Wagner will, indeed, enter the ranks of the more distinguished works of Art, but no longer be praised as the highest in Art; the genuine inspirations of former masters will maintain and preserve their claims, and the future?—will produce master-works of its own.—Wagner decidedly has not written a ‘drama of the future,’ but dramatic and musically effective operas, the appreciation and enjoyment of which requires no future generation. The present one is able to understand and appreciate their superiority, but it can also discover their weak points, which indeed, are sometimes quite apparent.

“I hold Wagner for one of the most important, powerful, and energetic Art-natures of our generation, but not the only one. Musically, Robert Schumann is fully his equal; technically, the latter is his superior, and possesses also more natural creative powers, although in opera he can not compete with the author of *Lohengrin*.”

It is not without a purpose that we have quoted from these *Letters to a Young Composer*. We know of nothing which will better show the importance and influence of Richard Wagner in musical matters upon our times; and, moreover, how differently those who know his music and his writings judge the man from those who know nothing of either, even when both parties are partisans of the “old school.” Prof. Lobe is as firm an opponent of the so-called Wagner party as are the critics of the *London Musical World* and *Athenæum*; but Prof. Lobe is acquainted with the works of the man he attempts to criticize, and mark the difference of his tone!

Conversations with Mendelssohn.

By the author of *Fliegende Blätter für Musik*, Leipzig, 1853.

IV.

On a subsequent occasion, I led the conversation back again to the “new paths.” The idea tormented me, and Mendelssohn's reasoning hal in no way convinced or tranquilized me.

“I heard,” I began, “your overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* a short time ago, for the first time. It appears to me to surpass all your former works in originality, nor can I compare it to any other composition, for it has no brother, or any family likeness. Might we not, therefore, say that you struck out, in it, a new path?”

“By no means,” Mendelssohn answered; “you have forgotten what I understood by ‘new paths:’ creations in accordance with newly-discovered, and, at the same time, higher laws of Art. In my overture I have not enounced a single new maxim. You will find for instance, in the grand overture to Beethoven's *Fidelio*, the same maxims that I have followed. My thoughts are different, for they are Mendelssohnian and not Beethovenian, but the maxims which guided me in composing were Beethoven's as well. We should be in an unfortunate position, if, because we followed the same road and created in accordance with the same principles, we could not produce new thoughts and new pictures. What has Beethoven done in his overture? He has painted the substance of his piece in tone-pictures. He has done so in a more than usually broad form of overture, and built up more than usually broad periods, and so have I. But our periods are essentially and entirely formed on the laws according to which the idea of a ‘period’ presents itself as a general rule to the human mind. If you test all the musical elements in this manner, you will find nowhere in my overture anything that Beethoven did not possess and turn to account, unless, indeed,” he continued, playfully, “you give me the credit of striking out a new path, because I employed the ophicleide.”

“You impute, then, the originality of invention to the well-defined subject that you had before your eyes when composing that overture?” I inquired.

“Certainly,” answered Mendelssohn.

“Then,” I continued, “we ought to be absolutely inundated with original works, for there is no lack of titles, containing a material value, and yet the music belonging to them is frequently of the most common description! According to your theory, Mr. A., Mr. B., and all the Messieurs throughout the alphabet, would have written your overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, had they only taken it into their heads to render the substance of the piece in tones?”

“If they had set about the work with the same earnestness,” responded Mendelssohn, “and identified themselves with the piece as zealously, they would all have produced higher and more important works than are to be produced without such a course.”

“If a man possesses talent, and yet manufactures ordinary trash, it is always his own fault. He does not employ his materials as he could employ them, were he in earnest. The most ordinary cause of ordinary compositions is a want of self-criticism and of an endeavor to improve. Had I printed everything without altering, there would be very little peculiar to remark in my works.—If I am allowed to possess any peculiar characteristics, I am conscious, in my own mind, that I owe them mostly to my strict self-criticism and my habit of altering and striving to improve. I have turned and twisted the thoughts—how many times have I frequently done so with one and the same—in order to transform their original ordinary physiognomy in to one more original, more important and more effective. Just as it may easily come to pass that two or three notes treated in a different manner, tonically or rhythmically, will give a single thought quite another look and expression, so, if we take examples of greater dimensions, an entire period either inserted or cancelled may make something extraordinary and effective out of something ordinary and ineffective. Good Heavens! only look at Beethoven's book of notes! only look at his notes for *Adelaide*! Why should he have set about altering at the very commencement? Because the first reading is flat and ordinary, while the second is lively, more expressive, and melodious. What will you bet that if you give me a thought, of the most ordinary description, I will not turn and twist it, as regards the outline, accompaniment, harmony and instrumentation, until I have changed it into something good? And just as in the case of a single notion, I would undertake to change, by alterations and improvements, a most ordinary piece into an interesting one.”

“That I believe,” I replied, with a feeling of perfect conviction.

"Well, then," said Mendelssohn, "what more would you have? Pigeons ready roasted do not fly into the mouth of the most talented artists.—Such a thing may happen, perhaps; but very rarely; as a rule, you must first catch, pluck, and roast them."

"And yet you have laid whole pieces on one side, as not having turned out especially well?" I inquired.

"That is very true," answered Mendelssohn; "many come into the world so sickly, that it would take as much, and perhaps more, time to render them strong and healthy than to create new ones. In such a case you prefer producing something new."

"But is it not possible," I asked, "by too much alteration, to render a work worse instead of better? Is not Goethe, for instance, right when he says:

'Hast deine Kastanien zu lange gebraten,
Sind dir alle zu Kohlen gerathen.' *

"Yes, such a thing might happen," replied Mendelssohn laughing. "What did Goethe ever say that was not deduced from facts? But I prefer letting one dish cook too long and be burnt, to having every dish brought up raw to the table."

V.

One day, I succeeded in leading the conversation back again to the subject mentioned in the last chapter, and put the question to him: Whether the artist could, knowingly, do still more for his idiosyncrasy, and whether he, Mendelssohn, was not conscious of certain modes of mental proceeding for this end?

"Except sharp self-criticism when the work is finished, and careful alterations, I can name you no others," said Mendelssohn. "And yet," he added, after a short pause, smiling ironically, and tapping me on the shoulder, "the fact of a musician's composing more, and *grubbing on less* in reflection, may also assist idiosyncrasy. As in every other thing in the world, so also in the case of the musician, there are secret agencies at work, which we perceive in the fact, but whose primitive grounds we can never find out. We enable these, by continual labor, to develop themselves, while we keep them back by too much merely critical reflection."

"I may grant that," I replied, "but still, we may be too easily contented, if we take this last view, and consider what is explicable in a subject as exhausted, at a stage when such is not, perhaps, the case. Had we dug further, we might, possibly, have discovered more."

"Have you done so, and discovered more?" inquired Mendelssohn, eagerly.

"I have certainly thought further about a thing, but without discovering much." The following ideas on the matter have suggested themselves to me:

"It strikes me that all we create is principally, though other causes have some influence, decided by what, in our art, *interests or repels*, especially *pleases or especially displeases*, in the works of our predecessors; for if we want to render ourselves a strict account of the impressions which musical compositions produce upon us, we find that many works do not please us at all—indeed, it is very seldom that we meet with one which satisfies us in every respect. In one case the melodic outline of the thought pleases us but not the accompaniment, or if the latter pleases, the harmony to it does not, and so on. Some persons, again, delight especially in the most vigorous thoughts, with a plentiful supply of brass instruments, while another individual, more delicately organized, does not like them, but prefers far more the finer, milder shades, etc. These likings and dislikings implanted in us, for productions of Art, constitute our *original individual dispositions*, and are, in their various degrees and combinations, intellectually, what the outward varieties of figure, bearing, and features are physically. In this respect, all men, or at least the great mass of individuals, possess a *disposition for idiosyncrasy*."

"There is something in what you say," replied

* Your chestnuts you have too much done;
They're burnt to cinders every one.

Mendelssohn. "I presume that you deduce from this the fact that the artist must give the reins to his original disposition; that he should not, for instance, seek to remodel or modify it in obedience to the authority of great artists, or even prevailing views, and that, by this means, he can work, with full consciousness, towards the development of his idiosyncrasy?"

"That is certainly what I mean," I continued. "There are, as I have already said, few men without idiosyncrasy originally, but there are very few of them who possess such *independent minds* as to be able to develop themselves entirely in accordance with their nature; they allow themselves to be caught by other influences, by æsthetical arguments, by criticisms on their works, by celebrated men, who command a large public, etc. They think they will pursue a safer course by taking the road followed by such persons, than by following the manner that is naturally their own, and thus, from this constraint, to which they subject themselves, become more or less imitators."

"That is perfectly right," said Mendelssohn, interrupting me. "Such independence, however, I can claim for myself, for I have been conscious of it from my earliest youth upwards. I cannot remember a single occasion on which I ever said in my own mind: 'You shall write a trio, like such and such a one of Beethoven, or Mozart, or any other master,' but I wrote it in conformity with my own taste, according to what floated before me generally as pleasing. Thus, for instance, I never liked the boisterous brass instruments, and have never favored them especially, although I have frequently enough had occasion to remark on how many of the public they produce an effect. I like parts finely worked out—the polyphonic style of composition, in which I may be no doubt principally influenced by my early contrapuntal studies with Zelter, and the study of Bach. And thus, in the fact of my seeking to develop what satisfies me, and what exists in my nature, may have arisen whatever idiosyncrasy people choose to attribute to me.—That is not so bad, not so bad," he exclaimed, as his eyes sparkled in that inimitable amiable manner, which was peculiar to him, when an idea pleased him. "That is not so bad," he continued, after he had walked on a few steps further, immersed in thought. "If, therefore, I remember these principles, and *act consistently* with regard to them, I can *guide myself by them*, and *direct myself alone* in the sphere of creating minds, properly so called."

"But," I observed, "this relying upon one's self has, also, its perils, when pursued too unconditionally, as, for instance, when the individuality of the Art of a period is opposed to it. In such a case, the artist remains alone; he cannot obtain a public, and becomes a martyr to his idiosyncrasy."

"Better to be a martyr than a mere repeater of others," said Mendelssohn. "But when was there ever a peculiar, and, at the same time, naturally important artistic mind that did not make its way, sooner or later? *Every man in whom there is an energetic idiosyncrasy obtains a public, provided he only holds out.* Many a man is, however, ruined from not continuing as he has begun, and, when he sees himself left a short time without exciting any remarkable degree of interest, abandoning his nature, and endeavoring to accommodate himself to such as are accounted the heroes of the day. Such men become renegades and converts, and turn back, exhausted, when perhaps near the victory they would have achieved, had they continued to fight on manfully. Do you suppose that I do not know I found no real appreciation for a considerable time? It is true that there was no dearth of *apparent appreciation* when I was present, but that did not mean much. I was under the necessity of introducing my works myself, for I seldom found them anywhere I went. This was, in truth, not very encouraging. But I thought: '*what you have done, you have done, and now you must go and see how it gets on in the world.* It must at last, although slowly, find those who think like it; for the world is very large and varied.' And so it proved. It proved so, too, because I continued

in my own way, without troubling my head much whether or when it would find more general acceptance."

"And would you really have held out, if appreciation had never been bestowed?" I inquired; "or did you not, as was natural, feel within you the conviction that your way was really worth something, and *must force itself a passage*?"

"I will not make myself out stronger than I really am," said Mendelssohn; "I never lost this conviction, or, at least, strong hope. One stroke does not fell a tree, I said to myself; very frequently a great number fail to do so, if it is vigorous. Every artist depends upon an *éclat*, that is to say, a work that hits the public hard; if that is achieved, the thing is done. The attention of the public is then excited, and, from that instant, it not only takes an interest in all the artist's subsequent works, but makes inquiries about his former ones, which it has passed by with unconcern, and thus he is fairly started. All music-publishers reckon on this, too. They continue to publish the works of talented composers for a long period, without expecting a profit from them. They wait for the work, the *éclat*, which enables them to dispose of the former ones as well."

"And such an *éclat* you achieved most triumphantly, with your overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*," I said. "I recollect very well what a sensation that overture produced, by its astonishing originality and truthfulness of expression, and how, from that moment you went up very high in the estimation of musicians as well as unprofessional people."

"I believe so, too," said Mendelssohn, "and thus, you see, we must trust a little to *luck* as well."

"Luck!" I exclaimed. "I should say that it was not the luck, but the genius of the composer that created an overture like the one in question."

"Talent," replied Mendelssohn, modestly changing my expression, "is naturally requisite in the matter; but I here call luck the inspiration of choosing the subject for the overture—a subject calculated to supply me with such musical ideas and forms as contained within themselves a general interest for the great mass of the public. All that I could do, at that period, as a composer, I was able to do previously. But I had never had such a subject for the exercise of my imagination. This was an inspiration, and the inspiration was a lucky one."

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

Music the Exponent of Emotion.

[Concluded from last week.]

This personality of the composer is ever at work and influences, more or less, the mind of every student of music, as we find many of the most delightful passages constantly recurring, or themes based upon old and familiar thoughts of Haydn and Mozart.

Such airs, having derived their rhythmical element from a universal emotion, and having taken an enduring hold upon the affections of the musical world, have consecrated those well known names in our memories and have identified themselves with all that is primarily beautiful in music.

The great, the overcoming reverence for a name has always entered into the essential spirit of our admiration for any work of genius, and, owing to the characteristic impress thus bestowed upon all the emanations of Art, where no language can successfully portray that which is the spiritual essence of the master mind, we need not wonder that personality occupies such an important position.

Into the arena of every noted mind we cannot enter; his thoughts descend upon us like sacred revelations, and for want of appropriate terms of definition, we are forced to name them his.

Thus the artist is not bound to render Nature in her own coloring, but is often tempted to give her a different interpretation from that by which she passes into the unsophisticated mind. In a similar manner the tone-painter leads us into those inner relations that are exclusively his, not by passing gradually from a simple to a complex degree of beauty, but by conducting us through the mists of discord into scenes of ravishing harmony.

As the painter selects Nature for the full play of his emotions, so the tone-artist has tones, rhythm and tact-emotion at his full command, and making these subservient to his feelings, fashions all his inventions of an unseen but imperishable beauty.

Unable to dive into his soul, we cannot name the particular ground of his emotions, only in so far as they may serve to move ourselves, attributing to him that which arises within us.

The opinions of mankind are always gregarious. Hence we find that the personality of genius receives an extraneous impulse from this cause, generally raising it to an eminence from which it cannot fall.

All master minds, however, lead these opinions, and often give a direction to the movements of the age in which they flourish. Thus BETHOVEN is regarded as the Messiah of modern music, appearing at a time when enlarged boundaries of musical conception were demanded, and when intellect was becoming allied to feeling. As in all similar instances, he led the age, because the age wanted him, and his style became gregarious because it was a response to the calls of an enlarged sentiment.

To this individuality, therefore, the world is necessarily indebted, as it indelibly stamps new marks of intellect upon its works and infuses into these the rare elements of its own being.

In the cause of music, personality must exert an important and salutary influence, since, in the absence of a practical language, we can designate the creations of the tone-Art by the characteristic fancy of individual genius.

To abjure metaphor, or the use of figure, altogether, we do not propose, but rather to eschew that excessive use of them which is apt to give wings to a too vague fancy and render the subject entirely meaningless.

We think in all cases where it is attempted to conduct the hearer into the visible and outer world by a passage through the inner world of tone, the composer should give an exposition of his design, in written language.

In this way, and in no other, can the concrete go hand in hand with musical abstraction.

Where poetical description is rendered illustrative of music, as in the "Seasons" and "Creation" of HAYDN, and the "Glocke" of ROMBERG, the enjoyment is lifted up from an enigmatical beauty of pure instrumentation to a certain and truthful comprehension of some real intention, on the part of the composer.

In the "Last Rose of Summer," we imagine we hear the sighing of autumn, with her melancholy cadences, or see the faded leaves falling; the fancy, however, is derived from the stanzas on which the air is founded, where all these intimations, first made in language, place the scene and action before us as precursors of the music. We should surmise that, in all of these instances, language had made all the first suggestions, leading the thought previously to our having heard the

tones, and that a primitive signification, as inherent in modulated tones, expressive of distinct real pictures, is entirely unapproachable.

We would yet suggest that the highest interest attaches itself to the æsthetical problem, as to how far the world of tone is illustrated by that of vision. It is proved by the fact that musical composition is striving to blend its harmonies with the glories and enchantments of outer nature and derive sustenance therefrom, that a strong identity of conception is always in operation, when the two apparently distinct organs of sense, the eye and the ear, are employed. In all beings endowed with a normal intellectuality, the senses are unquestionably co-operative and illustrative of each other; their separate perfection conduces to the perfection of the whole by continually adding to the sum of ætherial enjoyment and perception; and although it is often remarked that a one-sided culture concentrates the strength of diverse mental faculties and leads to the highest developments, yet in the æsthetical problem relating to an alliance of a pictorial and tone-imagination, we can see nothing less than an advance towards one of the highest attainments of human life. Many practical facts, applicable to the question before us, are to be found in the extreme popularity of music when introduced to raise the appreciation of pictorial displays, as well as to season every species of out-door life, under shady trees, and woodland recreations and festivities.

Here it is most successfully called to the aid both of Art and Nature, by filling up a void in the emotions, which the visual sense cannot independently supply. In this view of it, we might say that music embellishes Art and Nature, by adding to the soul's excitement and heightening its susceptibilities; yet we might, with equal justice, say that pictorial Art and Nature add to music, by bringing to bear upon it the harmonies of an outer world.

Although we may not conceal the fact that much of the effect here produced is derived from the pathological influences of out-door life, a pure atmosphere and genial companionship, combining to exalt the mind and body to their liveliest and happiest condition, yet the cause of the Art is not degraded thereby, but its moral influences are augmented.—What the practical uses of music may be, and how its cultivation might conduce to the true education of our people, softening and subduing the asperities of an austere conventionality and soulless materialism, we leave for the subject of another paper.

J. H.

Musical Chat-Chat.

We were by no means alone in the pleasure we received from Mr. SOUTHARD'S music. A genial correspondent of the *New York Evening Post*, under the head of "Art Gossip from Boston," writes as follows:

"But a more refined and subtler form of Art has a claim even now, and music, never amiss, seems to be the complement of the voice of Nature. I have heard music, new and fresh and good. Conventions of psalm-singers have met and sung here, and professors have sold their books. But with all their trading and money-changing in the temple of Art they have given much that was good. A new name among composers of native birth was introduced to us, which we think bids fair to be one of note. Mr. L. H. Southard brought out some new works—two overtures, descriptive, poetical, concert overtures, called 'Night in the Forest,' and 'The View from the Mountain,' both very beautiful in themes and

master-like in treatment, which were listened to as to the accepted and famous works of the Art. They are not native, as some national works I have heard, brazen, bedrugged potpourris of Yankee Doodle, the Star-Spangled Banner and Hail Columbia, but are like the works of the native scholar, who has sat at the feet of the great masters, studied their works, and become imbued with their spirit. Besides these were given selections from the 'Scarlet Letter,' an unfinished opera, the story of which is taken from Hawthorne's novel of that name, ingeniously and poetically made into a libretto, by a literary gentleman of Cambridge, with no little dramatic skill and effect. Three scenes were given by competent singers, with orchestral accompaniment, and I venture to say that the audience of your Academy of Music would come down with hearty and enthusiastic applause could it hear them. Rather German, Freischütz-like in general style, yet brilliant, too, as if an Italian fancy had conceived them and created them with more than Italian learning. Ole Bull, I dare say, would have had at least one good opera which could have competed for his prize; and, prize or no prize, I hope to hear before long the whole of the 'Scarlet Letter.'"

The New York Academy of Music is at last taking one step towards justifying its name and fulfilling the educational purpose described in its charter. It announces a free school for instruction in vocal music, under the direction of Signors AMATI DUBREUIL and TORRIANI, chorus-masters of the opera. It is open gratuitously to all applicants, and promises employment in the opera to such as may desire it. A nice way of replenishing the choruses!—The star of the Academy troupe for the coming season is to be MME. LAGRANGE. BERTUCCA, MORELLI, BRIGNOLI, AMODIO, and others are engaged; and we understand the management are in treaty with Miss HENSLEY. MIRATE, the tenor, we believe, has returned to Europe. Most of these artists are now in Newport, and there are rumors that they will give concerts in Boston, during the first weeks of the RACHEL excitement in the great metropolis. MAX MARETZKE is still conductor. The manager will be he whom *L'Eco d'Italia* calls "*Il piccolo ULLMAN*," while Sig. PAYNE, who is supposed to have "de moneys" will be "*il vitello d'oro*." . . . Mlle. TERESA PARODI with the pianist STRAKOSCH and his wife, assisted by APTOMMAS, the harpist, BERNARDI, baritone, and others, gave a concert at Niblo's on Tuesday evening, for the benefit of the sufferers by the yellow fever at Norfolk. Since her former career in this country, Parodi has been performing in the principal theatres in Italy; she returned to New York, under engagement with Strakosch, at the time of the falling out between the rival troupes at the Academy, which prevented her appearing. She has just returned from concertizing with Strakosch in the West.

Australia seems to be the golden lubberland just now for virtuosos. We read of an organ-grinder who has amassed a fortune there in a few months by the turning of his crank; and CATHERINE HAYES, who has returned there from Calcutta, is said to be reaping immense sums. . . . The opera at Madrid is to have the benefit of our old friend BENEVENTANO'S lusty baritone. . . . Sig. LORINI is at Paris, soon to be joined there by his wife (VIRGINIA WHITING). MARINI, the basso of the Havana troupe, has also arrived at Paris. . . . BETTINI, the tenor so admired here, is engaged to sing at Vienna three months, for \$6,000. . . . Our veteran unrivalled baritone, Sig. BADIALI, is to sail on the 5th for Italy. Possibly he will rejoin his old comrade SALVI, now manager of the Italian Opera at Paris. Of Badiali the Italian journal, *L'Eco d'Italia*, printed in New York, says: "In five years that he has trodden our stage he has never failed manager or public in a single instance.—Always in voice, always in tune, always the severe artist in all stage matters, never permitting himself the least exaggeration (?) either in singing or in action, he has reaped merited applause everywhere. Cesare Badiali had become indispensable to every

enterprise; the Italian Opera without him was a body without a soul. All the famous singers wanted him to second them. He sang with JENNY LIND, with SONTAG, in the ALBONI and the STEFFANONE and the other troupes too numerous to mention. The baritone, who is to succeed Badiali in the theatres of America, must possess great merits indeed. He was about to revisit his country for the first time after an absence of six years; but the last illness of his brother, FEDERICO BADIALI, the most faithful agent of the Havana Impresario, detained him two months, during which time he was a most devoted brother." Of all those heroes (from Havana) of our first golden opera days, PERELLI, the successful teacher in Philadelphia, is the only one of note remaining in America.

MISS ELISE HENSLEY'S concert at Newport was highly successful; so was another which she gave last week at LYNN, in company with the brilliant pianist, CARL HAUSE, now a resident of Salem. One of the *cognoscenti* tells us that she surpassed herself on this last occasion.... Mlle. VESTVALI has been giving brilliant concerts at Cape May.... *Cinderella*, by the PYNE and HARRISON troupe, still continues its attraction every second night at Niblo's. This engagement has been successful beyond precedent. Next week the new American opera, "Rip van Winkle," by GEORGE F. BRISTOW, of New York, will be brought out.

Fitzgerald's City Item sketches the programme of the approaching musical season in Philadelphia.—The Musical Fund Society are to give six concerts without foreign aid, "abandoning the ruinous star system"; there are rumors of classical symphony concerts, and also of a chorus added to the instrumental department and the performance of grand oratorios.... The Philharmonic Society will have their usual three concerts of miscellaneous music, with "stars.".... The Harmonia Sacred Music Society are to open with a new native Oratorio: "The Cities of the Plain," by FRANK DARLEY; to be followed by "The Creation," &c. LEOPOLD MEIGEN is to succeed Mr. STANBRIDGE as conductor; MICHAEL H. CROSS is retained as organist of the Society.... The subscription course of Oratorios, Cantatas and Madrigals announced by Messrs. THUNDER, CROUCH and ROHR, will soon commence. Mehul's "Joseph" and Rossini's "Moses in Egypt" form part of their programme.... The old Philadelphia Sacred Music Society is to be revived, and will "recall the days when the 'Seven Sleepers' (Löwe's Oratorio?) was the great admiration of Philadelphia.".... THOMAS BISHOP is to give Ballad Soirées, assisted by Mr. CROSS; Sig. PERELLI will of course continue his fashionable operatic concerts, with his large class of pupils; Mr. THORBECKE will renew his classical Chamber Concerts, of piano music, string quartets, &c.; also Mr. EDWARD L. WALKER, the pianist, after long silence, enters the field of classical and popular musical evenings. So much for Philadelphia! May all that, and more, be realized.

Our Berkshire village of Pittsfield has been enjoying musical opportunities this summer. We have before us the programmes of three *Soirées Musicales* given by Messrs. ENSIGN and KNERINGER, teachers of music in the Young Ladies' Institute in that place. The selections, while miscellaneous and popular, are tasteful and embrace compositions, instrumental and vocal, by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Schubert, as well as by Rossini, Auber, Bishop, Balfe, &c. Verily the Musical Department, or *Staff*, (for it has five lines) of the Pittsfield Institute, is singularly large and formidable for a New England literary seminary. It consists of J. L. ENSIGN, Organ, Piano, Vocal Music and Harmony; A. KNERINGER, piano; J. JONES, development and culture of the voice; Mme. RICHARD, piano, harp, guitar, and Miss E. L. B. CLARKE, piano. Mr. Ensign was for several years

the Secretary of the New York Philharmonic Society, and the influence of such musicians must be good in the "rural districts."

RICHARD WAGNER is again in Zurich, more quietly settled apparently than he has left the hypercritical world in London. The article which we borrow from the *Musical Review* in another column, shows that those who *know* about his music, even though they agree not with his theories, talk about him very differently from the *Athenæum*, *Times* and *London Musical World*.... We had not room last week, or we should have asked our readers to compare the passages in Prof. LOBE'S "Conversations with MENDELSSOHN", where that master speaks of certain compositions of his which he never wished to see the light, with the still reiterated bark of the London critics at his Leipzig executors, because they refrain from publishing all that he left in manuscript. (See in the same number, the piece headed "Droll Blunders").

The following statistics of the German Theatre, which we translate from a German paper, are not without interest. There are in Germany 165 theatres, including 19 real Court theatres, 12 town theatres of the first rank, 28 town theatres of the second rank, 39 town theatres of the third rank, and 67 travelling companies, 20 of which are of good reputation and financially flourishing. The amount of business done in the theatres of the first rank is reckoned at 100—400,000 thalers; in the larger town and smaller Court theatres at 80—100,000 thalers; in the smaller town theatres at 36—50,000 thalers, and in the smaller establishments, which are open only in the winter season, at 6—20,000 thalers. The number of players, singers and dancers who reside in Germany runs up to 6,000; the number of chorists, orchestra members, stage-officials, costumers, &c., to 8,000.—With regard to salaries it is approximately estimated that the principal artists, who receive 2,500—6,000, or 4,000 to 12,000 thalers, number about 50. The average pay in court and town theatres of the first rank to artists who take the first parts, is 1,000—2,500 thalers; the second characters average 500—1000 thalers. Good town theatres and smaller court theatres, regarded as a second category, pay for the first rôles 800—2,000 thalers, for the second 400—600 thalers. Theatres of the third rank pay for the first rôles 400—800 thalers (at the maximum for first tenor and *prima donna* 1,000 thalers), for second rôles 250—400 thalers. In travelling companies the maximum wages are from 40 to 60 thalers per month, the minimum from 12 to 15. Members of orchestra and chorus commonly get between 14 and 24 thalers, and 16—36 florins.

The Royal Italian Opera in London closed its successful season on the 9th of August, with the eighth performance of *L'Etoile du Nord*. MEYERBEER seems to have quite monopolized the stage during the last weeks. GRISI and MARIO made their last appearance, July 28th, in the *Inguenots*; the *Athenæum* charitably hopes it will be Grisi's very last; the *World* has no doubt of her re-engagement; the *Times* says of Mario: "His voice has been in such order, as not to have failed him on any occasion; and it is gratifying to be able to add that he has not once disappointed the subscribers and the public. The singing of this accomplished tenor becomes every day more refined, and his keen dramatic intelligence has kept pace with his vocal progress." On the 31st the *Prophète* was performed, and again Aug. 2, with Mme. VIARDOT, Mlle. MARAI and Sig. TAMBERLIK. On the 8th ROSSINI'S *Otello* was given for the only time this season, VIARDOT, TAMBERLIK and GRAZIANI being principals.

LISZT at Weimar is arranging choruses to Herder's *Prometheus* for concert performance.... Mme. JENNY LIND GOLDSCHMIDT lately gave a concert at Ems, with Mme. CLARA SCHUMANN, for the benefit of

ROBERT SCHUMANN, who is again in a state of almost hopeless insanity.... Musical matters get out of joint sometimes even in more musical cities than Boston and New York. Three great and opulent cities, Cologne, Hamburg, and Frankfort-on-the-Maine, are, at the present moment, it is said, incapable of supporting a respectable theatre. At Leipzig, too, the theatre is closed.

An extract from an English soldier's letter from the Crimea is affecting, and affords a remarkable instance of a man singing his own dirge:

The other night I was in the intrenchments, and a good number of us were sitting together amusing ourselves. One was singing a song called "Mary, weep no more for me," in which occur these beautiful lines:

"Far, far from thee I sleep in death,
So, Mary, weep no more for me,"

when a shell came in, burst among us, and killed the man while he was singing the song.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, SEPT. 1, 1855.

Musical One-Idea-ism.

We have to remark upon a few more of "Counterpoint's" strange statements under the head of "Hints Concerning Church Music" in the *Transcript*, copied in full in our last number. The drift of his whole series of communications, we have seen, has been to the setting up of a certain exceedingly exclusive Anglo-Catholic standard of Church Music. MOZART and HAYDN, all the Italians, all the Germans (except only HANDEL, whom he classes among Englishmen!), to say nothing of our native anthem and psalm-wrights, have produced nothing worthy to be sung at holy times, while a few old English composers, of the time of Queen Elizabeth, were pre-ordained to make the only legitimate religious music for all peoples of all ages since then and to come! That, so far as it is possible to gather his meaning, seems to be the amount of it.

4. After *snubbing* those young men and women who sing Haydn's and Mozart's Masses, by way of musical and social pleasure and improvement, he recommends as better exercise the practice of the "fine old English glees and madrigals." Fine they are, many of them, doubtless, in their way—learned, contrapuntal, full of fugue, and often built upon good English words, though quite as often on the silliest love stanzas. But that they are less liable to the objection of artificiality and of desire to please, than are the Masses, may be questioned. Moreover our friend forgets that the Madrigal, as such, was not of English, but Italian origin. Palestrina and others wrote Madrigals, long before the form was grafted upon English musical culture. This is only one of many instances in which he will find that in showing up the superiority of his favorite *English* music, he is by that very act endorsing something which he dreads as "foreign."

5. We wish all of "Counterpoint's" remarks were as sensible as those upon learning to sing English well. There is no questioning the truth of what he says of the importance of distinct articulation. But to assume that the study of German or Italian necessarily unfits one for the articulation of English, is to go too far. Articulation is an essential of good singing in whatever language, and he who cultivates it in one will be less inclined

to slight it in another. Have you not seen that foreigners, in seeking to acquire our language, articulate distinctly to a fault? Still more extravagant it is to assume that all the elements of the true school of Song are necessarily to be found among those who can best teach how to keep English words distinct in singing. We should rather seek the school of Song among those nations who are most full of the spirit, of the genius of Song,—that is, in the most musical nations. In this connection the writer honors our Journal with a mention, in a paragraph so curiously perplexed and full of *non sequiturs*, that we must copy it again.

A writer in Dwight's Journal of Music complains of the indistinctness of musical utterance with some of our popular vocalists, "insomuch that one might be led to conjecture that the use of singing was to stifle words." No doubt; but is not this a strange complaint, coming as it does from a source which denies the existence of any English school of music? Who can ever forget the greatness of expression, the largeness of style, the wonderful effect, which characterized the singing of those famous exponents of the English school, Braham, Phillips and Anna Bishop. What, "no English school, but only singers of English?" What can such an opinion be worth, when it comes from a person who professes his ignorance of English church music; of that which is the very head and front of all music, and in which Handel took great delight; indeed, he was an Englishman in everything save the accident of birth.

How any possible opinion with regard to an alleged English school of music should disqualify one for requiring distinct musical utterance in singers, whether English, German or Italian, is beyond our feeble comprehension. We cannot see that the two things are in any way connected. We do not remember where or when we may have used the expression quoted, but are willing to suppose that in some connection we did use it. What has an opinion about the artistic, musical merits of a certain class of composers to do with an opinion about the technical requirements of good singing—essentially the same in every language? But if we have chanced to say there was "no English school" of singing, "but only singers of English," have we thereby denied that those who sing in English ought to sing distinctly? What could our remark mean but this: that singing, while it has to do with words, has more essentially to do with music, and that the singing of English words, in however English a way, does not constitute an English school of music; since a peculiarly English and original character of musical genius would be requisite for that. In singing, however, there is but one school, from which all nations have derived the true traditions; and that is the Italian; and it is none the less Italian, that Braham, Bishop, &c., have applied it happily to English words.

6. We cannot indeed profess any very intimate acquaintance with the old English Church music, or even with the more modern English Church music, which Mr. Hogarth, in the passages cited by "Counterpoint," extols upon the ground of its entirely unprogressive character. "Counterpoint" goes still further, goes the whole length, and calls this English Church music "the very head and front of all music"! Then there is more musical genius, more inspiration, more of the highest qualities of Art in the severely traditional and antique style of those services sung and chanted in the English Church, than in the

sublimest works of Bach and Handel and Mozart and Beethoven! But if it be so, why has not their charm penetrated further? why has not their potency been felt beyond the limits of a Church? why have they not interested the outsiders, as the Masses written by great masters for the Romish Church have done? why has not Germany, so all-accepting and hospitable to works of genius from all quarters, been forward to appreciate them, as she did the English Shakspeare? No! their glory was "adhering to the exclusive ecclesiastical style." It is in this *exclusiveness* that "Counterpoint" and Hogarth find their merit, and not in their intrinsic charm, originality, sublimity as music. To rule out all that ever grew outside the English Church walls, and then call the English the "head and front" of all music, is a convenient way of making out a case. Why, among Englishmen themselves is any strictly English music half as much admired, as Handel's, or more latterly, as Beethoven's and Mendelssohn's?—Does England owe to her Tallises and Byrds, in any thing like the degree she owes to Handel's residence in England, her high estimation of the Art, her great Birmingham and Norwich festivals, her numbers of accomplished organists, her Philharmonic Societies, her patronage of "foreign" artists and composers, (in which no country ever went so far, O "Counterpoint," as England), and all that makes her in any sense a musical nation at this day? Are Handel's choruses at all like those old august Elizabethans whom you make the "head and front" of all? Have they their prototypes in anything that any Englishman composed before him? On the contrary is not the modern English music (so far as it runs not after later German and Italian models) all full of Handel, echoes and reflections of his mighty genius?—Handel an Englishman!

THE BOSTON MUSIC HALL.—Upon this subject, the writer of the following, as all will see by his initials, is certainly entitled to a hearing.

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

It has been a painful and surprising thing to see, that in the justly condemning newspaper articles upon the proposed "Baby Show," not a word has been said against the desecration of a building mis-called Music Hall, and in the construction of which some few of the persons who aided, supposed that the building if ever used for any other than musical purposes, would find in those purposes worthily associated aims and objects.

That any Exhibitions or Discourses connected with sister Arts, or Sciences, or Chrritable purposes, or even that innocent festivities should there be allowed, would neither have offended nor roused the most delicate susceptibilities—for it is perhaps too much to expect, that in our new country so noble a building could be exclusively consecrated to its legitimate and ostensible purpose. But that the building which was to serve as a Temple, should be thus profaned, and the profanation passed over in silence, would be a disgrace to Boston and those few Bostonians who love Art for Art's sake. Far better sell the building, and thereby acknowledge the fact that the public do not feel enough for Art to make such a building yet necessary among us, than let it, under the name of Music Hall, be used for low and catch-penny exhibitions. If the money changers cannot be chased from the Temple, let it be sold and be called by another name, and let all in who will pay the price—but do not let us act a falsehood, and call it by a wrong name. Let not the master works of the great composers be heard in a building which will ever after merit the name of Barnum's Nursery. C. C. P.

CONCERT AT THE NAHANT HOTEL.—Mrs. J. H. LONG, assisted by Mr. ARTHURSON, and Mr. SOUTHARD as pianist, gave a very pleasant concert at this fine hotel, on Saturday evening last, to quite a large audience. The programme was an excellent one of the lighter sort, and both vocalists were in excellent voice, though the room (the dining hall) was by no means well adapted for musical effects, which seemed in one instance to tell somewhat on the accuracy of intonation of the lady. ROSSINI's exquisite duet: *Mira la bianca luna* was exquisitely given by both artists, and seemed rarely appropriate for the evening, which was bright with the brightest of full moons, whose light was reflected doubly glorious in the sparkling waters. The steamer Nelly Baker made an extra trip, returning after the concert, with a goodly number of passengers tempted by the good music and the pleasant sail to spend the evening at this delightful place.

A choice little band of some of our best musicians is engaged there for the summer by Mr. Stevens, who leaves nothing undone that can promote the comfort and enjoyment of his guests. We heard them one evening and were much pleased with the excellence of the performance of this little band, and the good taste of their selections. Mr. KREBS of the Mendelssohn Quintette Club is their leader.

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